



## Early Journal Content on JSTOR, Free to Anyone in the World

This article is one of nearly 500,000 scholarly works digitized and made freely available to everyone in the world by JSTOR.

Known as the Early Journal Content, this set of works include research articles, news, letters, and other writings published in more than 200 of the oldest leading academic journals. The works date from the mid-seventeenth to the early twentieth centuries.

We encourage people to read and share the Early Journal Content openly and to tell others that this resource exists. People may post this content online or redistribute in any way for non-commercial purposes.

Read more about Early Journal Content at <http://about.jstor.org/participate-jstor/individuals/early-journal-content>.

JSTOR is a digital library of academic journals, books, and primary source objects. JSTOR helps people discover, use, and build upon a wide range of content through a powerful research and teaching platform, and preserves this content for future generations. JSTOR is part of ITHAKA, a not-for-profit organization that also includes Ithaka S+R and Portico. For more information about JSTOR, please contact [support@jstor.org](mailto:support@jstor.org).

## ADVANCED HIGH SCHOOL FRENCH IN WAR TIMES

In this paper I wish to show how peculiarly fit the study of the French language and literature is for the training of the individual in war time, or other times, and in doing so I shall have the help of Instructor Blayney's report on causes for success and failure in the training-school for officers at Camp Funston.

In giving this account of the work of pupils of third-year French, I have in mind Dr. Sachs' most timely article in the January number of this review—indeed, his article is the cause of this attempt to give the experience of one teacher with regard to questions raised by him.

The work discussed here is being carried on with mixed classes of ten to twenty in number, Seniors, Juniors and Sophomores, grouped, as far as possible, according to their mental development. Almost all the pupils have had on entering two years' training<sup>1</sup> in spoken French, in sentence building, grammar, "detailed" study of a few books and "rapid reading" of more. In detailed study the pupil is responsible for every word and idea of the text; he must be able to reproduce and discuss the text. With the "rapid reading" books the pupil throws himself into the French story, reads without translating, looking up only the words necessary for the essential idea of the paragraph. His reading is checked up by the oral and written reports which he makes on the books read at home.

In third-year French, with the detailed study of Maupassant's *Deux Amis*, *la Peur*, *la Parure*, and the reading of *la Ficelle*, the pupil grows familiar with the logical development of a story, accuracy of thinking, "minimum of words for maximum of ideas," clarity of expression, impersonality of writing, penetration below the surface, accurate description of nature and other artistic devices as an integral part of the story; he realizes that the ordinary individual, the democratic citizen, can become heroic under the stimulus of patriotism, that a woman who has spent her life dreaming of the pleasures of the "idle rich", to the neglect of her obvious duties, can, stimulated by the desire to be honest, willingly

---

<sup>1</sup>For accounts of this preparation consult Miss Spink's article in the January number of the JOURNAL and one by Mr. Bovée which will appear shortly.

undertake and carry through a life of horrible hardship. And the ironic *dénouement* does not discourage the pupil for he goes below the surface and understands that the woman has "made good." Indeed, this ironic humor of Maupassant is the source of pleasure and develops mental alertness as it brings out his ideas on war, patriotism, friendship, cruelty of heedless pleasantries, destructive power of fear, need for better education and government. The pupil, through such study, sees that accuracy of thinking, exact expression of ideas, mental effort, perseverance under difficulties are necessary for development; that laziness, mental and physical, and the "à peu près" are weaknesses that vitiate all effort.

From the stories of Daudet: *Siège de Berlin* and *Maître Cornille*, comes pleasure in a well-told tale, sympathy with the "grit" of the granddaughter and of the old miller, admiration of fidelity to ideals in Maître Cornille and Colonel Jouve. They relax the tension of the study of Maupassant's more serious work, they serve, by contrast, to bring out the value of the latter writer. Other short stories are read in class or at home for the purpose of comparison, in structure and idea—by Mérimée, by About and an occasional one to show up the "sentimental" story.

Grammar and formal composition too have been worked at in connection with these short stories. In the course of the year there is a systematic review of the matter in Angus' *Résumé of Grammar* and Comfort's *Prose Composition*, or Talbot's is studied. This is the only part of the class work that involves the use of English save an occasional word.

After four months of short story in class, we read *le Livre de Mon Ami*, and this book is a joy to almost every pupil. He appreciates the perfect simplicity of expression, he reflects with France on his own life, his home, his education, the employment of his leisure, social conditions. He wishes to discuss these subjects in class, to write upon them the little papers that we call "original themes". He imbibes the author's ideas on the importance of good home conditions, on the need for a "real" education which involves a knowledge of present day conditions as well as a vital study of the "liberal" subjects for the all-round development of the individual. It is the Class Discussion, as we call it, that makes it possible for the pupil to get a real hold of these ideas,

by reproducing them in detail first, then discussing the best way to sum them up, by choosing the most essential points, by criticism and argument, and in so doing he steadily increases his working vocabulary and develops in accuracy of thought and expression. Each pupil is free to say what he thinks of the ideas of pupils and teacher, and he sees the necessity for impersonality and lack of self-consciousness in discussion. It is these talks with the pupils that enable the teacher to advise more effectively the individual's home reading. The pupil chooses from a list of eighty books, after discussion in class and counsel of teacher and other pupils, who bear in mind the desirability of getting as wide an appreciation of French literature as is possible in the time, the value of the book *per se* and the taste and limitations of the individual. More stress than usual has been laid this year on books that tend to develop the characteristics which we, under pressure of the war, have come to recognize more clearly as necessary for any genuine success. The majority of pupils, if wisely directed in their choice, will acquire the habit of reading French for pleasure and profit and will, by the end of the year, realize that they know too much French to "let it go" and are then ready for suggestions as to future work by themselves, or with other teachers—their French has become a part of their life. The following books are a few of those recommended to, and appreciated by the different pupils:

<i>Author</i>	<i>Book</i>	<i>Subjects</i>
Hugo <sup>2</sup>	les Misérables	Need for reform in social conditions; in justice; in the army; in class and sex distinction.
de Vigny	le Cachet rouge	
de Vigny	la Canne de jonc	
Beaumarchais	le Barbier de Séville	
France	Crainquebille	
Brieux	la Robe Rouge	
Brieux	la Femme seule	
Coppée	Fais ce que dois	Duty and honor.
Coppée	Bijoux de la délivrance	
Corneille	le Cid	
Lavedan	Servir	

<sup>2</sup>Abridged edition of Hugo.

Bazin	les Oberlé	Alsace-Lorraine
Barrès	Colette Baudoche	German or French culture
Hugo	Quatre-vingt-treize	After the French Revolution
Daudet	Robert Helmont	} 1870-71.
Sarcey	Siège de Paris	
Balzac	Eugénie Grandet	} Studies of the French girl and woman.
Renan	Sœur Henriette	
Tinayre	Hellé	
Molière	Femmes savantes	
Brieux	la Française	
Audoux	Marie Claire	
Sand	la Mare au Diable	Studies of the peasant.
Sand	Fadette	
Balzac	Cousin Pons	Fidelity in friendship, the greed of the many.
Balzac	le Père Goriot	Excess of parental love
Hugo	les Travailleurs de la mer	} The sea and the workers on it.
Loti	Pêcheur d'Islande	
Balzac	Eugénie Grandet	} The miser
Molière	l'Avare	
Daudet	Tartarin de Tarascon	} Humor and comedy.
Molière	le Bourgeois Gentilhomme	
Molière	les Précieuses ridicules	
Beaumarchais	le Barbier de Séville	
Capus	Brignol et sa fille	
Bruey	Patelin	
Marivaux	le Jeu de l'amour et du hasard	
Sardou	Pattes de mouche	

The pupil reads at home a minimum of 1200 pages and a maximum that is limited only by his time, desire and ability, so opening

up to the more able pupil an adequate field for his efforts. He talks of his book in class and writes a résumé or critical review of it. The pupils profit thus by the reading of all the members and acquire from the contributions of each other and the teacher's aid, some ideas of the historical and literary movements of the 17th, 18th and 19th centuries.

The study of 25 poems, ranging from the *Spring Rondeau* of Charles d'Orléans to a selection from the *Chanson d'Ève* of van Lerberghe, is made to contribute its quota to the "general idea" of French literature, to give the simple rules of versification and, more important than all, to interest the pupil in French verse. The poems are first read and talked over in class and choice made of those to be learned by heart.

What is gained from class discussion and the "five minute speech" is put down in the ever-present note-book with its divisions of general conversation, literature and history, class-text, grammar and composition, and, from time to time, this matter is reviewed and tabulated in class.

The "five minute speech" is another variety of oral work that develops the pupil's initiative and independence, teaches him to criticize and be criticized impersonally, improves his delivery and correlates his French work with that of other departments, English, History, etc. The pupil chooses a subject from those offered by the teacher or elects one of his own, writes his paper, becomes familiar with the matter and then reads it to the class. Discussion follows as to the ideas, the French and the presentation. Sometimes the paper is first submitted to the teacher for correction, then learned by heart and delivered as a speech. Through this medium the class has gained knowledge of the various types of English work: Socialized English, the Magazines, Journalistic English, Dramatic Art; or ideas from the History class on periods that concern them, Louis XIV, Colbert, French Revolution; or other ideas from such subjects as: "Classic" and "Romantic" in the English class, the Value of Class Discussion in French and other courses, Value of the Imagination, Is the Subject or the Teacher the more Important in our Education, My Leisure and what I Do with it. This work comes in best after the pupil has become at home with the class and has acquired the habit of reciting the poem and reading to the class from the

front of the room. The subject must be one that interests the individual who makes the speech; he is sure to interest the others if he speaks clearly.

This year the time usually given to the detailed reading of a play is being absorbed by discussing matters pertaining to the war and the development of the five minute speech. The outcome of the former up to date is:

1. Money (\$30.00) has been collected, chiefly in the class penny-box, for certain Belgian soldiers whose families are in the Invaded District, and these men have been adopted by the pupils. The adoption means the writing of one good letter at least once a month with postal cards or an occasional gift the other weeks. The correspondence is usually faithfully kept up by the pupil, judging by that carried on by pupils of the preceding year.<sup>3</sup>

2. The adoption of an orphan by the 40 pupils of my room in addition to their share in the "School orphans". For our orphan \$30.00 has been collected, letter written to the orphan and box of gifts sent.

3. The money, collected in the class penny-box since January, (\$30, so far) is to be sent to the French wounded and there are already numerous volunteers for correspondence with these men, if the workers in Paris, to whom I have written, desire it.

The actual suggestions for the undertaking of such work came from the class and the arrangements for it, in so far as possible, are carried out by them, by individuals chosen by the class. Not only are the pupils doing their "bit" that they are already fit to do, but they are increasing their vocabulary, their interest in the war situation, their ability to help. Letters to and from our people are read by them to the class. The "actuality" of our French work is put beyond question and the pupil enabled to realize the power he had in entering third year and urged to make sure of progress, month by month. From the letters read we have gained a knowledge of certain desirable things: the beauty of orderliness, of courage, of cheerfulness.

I alluded above to the tabulating of our knowledge at intervals and with that might be grouped what we call our statistics.

---

<sup>3</sup>The choice of these soldiers was made by Mrs. Mary Paddon, Maryhill, Welcomes Road, Kenley, England, who spent the money for us in Christmas gifts to the soldiers and who would be glad to know of other schools desirous of corresponding with these men of the invaded country.

From these latter, kept by the pupil with regard to the time spent on the different branches of the work, the words per page looked up in dictionary, etc., we have been able to draw certain conclusions—for example: that those pupils who read aloud most faithfully at home make the most progress in pronunciation; that the pupil will work with more concentration after comparing his results with those of a pupil who already has that habit; that the average of nine new words per page in close study is right for the average pupil. At the same time we realize that these statistics as kept by the pupil will not always be exact. By tabulating the knowledge acquired gradually, I mean, for instance, summing up such characteristics as we have found in the writings of the Romantic group, and opposing to these what we know of the classics, or by arranging rules for the study of the class—text and home reading—the result of the wisdom of the class—or, and this one I shall give in detail, the summing up, after three or four months of the factors we have found make for progress in French and, facing these, the qualities that Instructor Blayney's report shows to be necessary for success at Camp Funston.

Progress in the following items insisted upon in the French classes:

*Factors that make for success in the study of French*

Accuracy of thinking and expression of thought.

Rapidity in thinking and in speech.

Concentration in class and at home in order to acquire the greatest amount of "French" in return for the time given.

Precision of articulation; mouth open, lips flexible, voice agreeable to others as helps to getting "across" one's ideas.

Good bearing; helpful for health, speech, thinking and appearance.

*Factors that make for success in the training classes for officers at Camp Funston. (Drawn from Instructor Blayney's report).*

Accuracy in thinking and action.

Alertness of mind.

Increase of mental effort.

Good voice for the presentation of ideas; strong, clear voice; mouth open and lips free.

Clear and unequivocal statement.

Good bearing.

Grit—the need to accept



A fair amount of effort will result in the ability to speak French with ease, to understand spoken French, to read for pleasure and profit, in a knowledge of the grammar, of how to direct one self in the study of literature and history. To achieve this one must "play the game", "carry on", one must give and take criticism in an impersonal fashion with less and less of self-consciousness.

criticism without having "his feelings hurt" and to look to the goal, making whatever effort is necessary.

In the French classes, mental and physical laziness, inaccuracy of thought and idea are constantly fought against. In Instructor Blayney's report we find that he notes as the most glaring fault "slouchiness", a mental and physical indifference.

From all of which I conclude that the study of French, pursued in the way described, will materially contribute to the right development of the pupil.

FRANCES R. ANGUS.

The University High School,  
The University of Chicago.